

Richard Burden MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Tom Cuddeford
Guardians House
2111 Coventry Road
Sheldon
B26 3EA

Please quote in correspondence
Our Ref: W\lrh\060913\CUDD01001

06 September 2013

Dear Tom Cuddeford,

Thank you again for your letter about cuts to police funding.

I just wanted to let you know that I have written to the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, to raise this issue on your behalf. I have now received a reply from Damian Green, the Home Office Minister responsible for this area. I enclose a copy of the minister's letter for your information.

I also wanted to let you know that I will be asking parliamentary questions about the impact of cuts to policing in the West Midlands to keep pressure on this issue.

I would of course be interested to meet with you and some of your members in the Autumn to discuss this issue further. Please do contact Lucy Hadley in my office to set up a meeting – lucy.hadley@parliament.uk or 020 7219 2318.

Thank you again for getting in touch and if I can be of any further assistance on this, or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Burden', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Burden MP
Birmingham Northfield

P.S. Would you like to keep up to date on what I am doing as your MP? You can sign up to receive my monthly e-newsletter online at www.richardburden.com/signup

As part of my commitment to keeping constituents informed both I and the Labour Party sometimes write to constituents on issues that may be of interest to them. If you do not wish to receive this information please let me know.



Home Office

Rt Hon Damian Green MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR POLICING AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF
www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Richard Burden MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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Your Reference: W/Irh/300713/CUDD01001

Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter of 30 July to the Home Secretary on behalf of Mr Tom Cuddeford, Deputy Chairman of West Midlands Police Federation regarding police funding cuts in West Midlands. I am replying as Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice.

I have previously received correspondence from David Winnick MP on behalf of Mr Cuddeford and I will respond along the same lines.

Mr Cuddeford raises concerns about the impact Spending Round reductions will have on policing in the West Midlands. The Home Secretary was absolutely clear throughout the Spending Round process for 2015/16 that the police must have adequate funding to continue efforts to cut crime. In addition to making the police a priority within the Home Office, the settlement which she agreed with the Chancellor also protects counter-terrorism policing capabilities, reflecting the ongoing threat to the UK from terrorism.

As you may be aware in 2015/16 central Government funding for the police will reduce by 4.9 per cent in real terms or £269 million, compared with 2014/15 – a smaller percentage reduction than the overall Home Office reduction of 6.1 per cent, and significantly smaller than the reductions agreed for many other public services. Once future police precept income (based on forecasts from the

independent Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) is taken onto account, the reduction in overall funding for the police amounts to 3.1 per cent.

I recognise that this reduction will be challenging but the police must play their part in helping to reduce the deficit. The police are already proving that they are capable of doing more with less: police reform is working and crime is falling. Recorded crime is down by more than 10 per cent under this Government and the independent Crime Survey for England and Wales shows crime at its lowest level since records began. Further reform – led by police at local level, but supported by a new Police Innovation Fund, greater collaboration between the emergency services, and work to reduce the number and cost of police ICT contracts – will enable them to go on cutting crime as budgets are reduced.

Mr Cuddeford expresses concern that central government funding reductions are harsher on West Midlands Police due to its low level of the police precept component of council tax. The Government is clear that setting the precept is a matter for individual PCCs, taking into account the views of the local community and Police and Crime Panels. As you may be aware, the Localism Act 2011 sets out a process by which increases in the level of council tax in England, over an 'excessive amount' are subject to a local referendum. This ensures that local people are able to veto an excessive increase in their council tax. PCCs in England can choose to exceed the excessive limit in their areas but this would trigger a local referendum.

I also note Mr Cuddeford's concerns about damping. As you may know, damping is a means of ensuring stability in funding between years. After considering the responses of an informal consultation on damping, the Home Secretary decided that every police force area in 2013/14 (and in 2014/15) will face the same percentage reduction in core central Government funding. The cash reduction in this funding for 2013/14 is 1.6 per cent. It is important to note that damping is only one part of the police funding picture, which is driven by the Police Allocation Formula (PAF). Until the review of the PAF is completed the Government considers that it would be inappropriate to change existing arrangements.

I hope that this clarifies the Government's position on these matters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian Green', is written over a faint, larger signature that is partially obscured.

Rt Hon Damian Green MP